

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the  
Louisiana Emergency Response Commission (LERC)**

**Meeting Title** Louisiana Emergency Response Commission Meeting  
**Date of Meeting** September 12, 2013  
**Where** Joint Emergency Services Center  
Staff Development Center  
1400 West Irene Road  
Zachary, LA 70791  
**Start Time** 10:00 a.m.

1. Lt. Colonel David Staton called the meeting to order at 10:09 a.m.
2. Elizabeth Ecker, LSP/Right-to-Know Unit, called roll as follows:

Colonel Michael Edmonson, Department of Public Safety, NOT PRESENT  
Lt. Colonel David Staton, Department of Public Safety, PRESENT  
Peggy Hatch, Department of Environmental Quality, NOT PRESENT  
Cheryl Nolan, Department of Environmental Quality, PRESENT  
Dr. Mike Strain, Department of Agriculture and Forestry, NOT PRESENT  
Dr. Brent Robbins, Designee for Department of Agriculture and Forestry, PRESENT  
Kevin Davis, Governor's Office of Homeland Security, NOT PRESENT  
Captain Taylor Moss, Department of Public Safety, NOT PRESENT  
James Polk, Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Association, PRESENT  
Cecil Bennett, Carrol L. Herring Fire and Emergency Training Institute, PRESENT  
Brian Wynne, Representative of Environmental Interest, PRESENT  
Edward Flynn, Louisiana Chemical Association, PRESENT  
Chief Bobby Black, NOT PRESENT  
Mayor Hiram Copeland, NOT PRESENT  
Chief Jeremy Cryer, Resigned, NOT PRESENT  
Chief Samuel Halphen, Jr., NOT PRESENT  
Sheriff Willy Martin, Resigned, NOT PRESENT  
Paul Naquin, NOT PRESENT  
Lt. Chris Rushing, PRESENT  
Chris Guilbeaux, PRESENT  
Senator Mike Walsworth, NOT PRESENT  
Senator Mack "Bodi" White, PRESENT

The records reflect that the following visitors were present:

Peter Ricca, DEQ  
Francis Hymel, St. James Office of Emergency Preparedness  
Duval Arthur, St. Mary Parish  
Kelly Feet, Louisiana State Police  
Jan Herrington, Positive Results  
Chris Viator, Louisiana Oil Spill Commission Office

The records also reflect that the following LSP/Right-to-Know personnel were present:

Gene Dunegan  
Miklos Gyorgy  
Elizabeth Ecker  
Paul Schexnayder, Louisiana State Police Legal Counsel  
Justin Bello, Louisiana State Police Legal Clerk

3. Lt. Colonel David Staton welcomed everyone and asked the commission to approve the minutes from the June 10, 2013 LERC meeting. **A MOTION** was made to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded. No opposition. The motion passed.
4. Lt. Colonel Staton advised LERC members to review their contact information and relay any changes to Ms. Elizabeth Ecker or Mr. Miklos Gyorgy. He stated that he wants to keep the information on the website as current as possible.

Lt. Colonel Staton announced the formal resignation of Pat Santos; a copy was included in everyone's folder.

#### 5. **Committee Reports:**

Long Range Planning: No Report. Lt. Colonel Staton indicated that Chief Samuel Halphen has volunteered to chair the Long Range Planning committee. But, due to the wording in the bylaws, the wording would need to be changed and voted on to allow Chief Halphen to accept the Long Range Planning committee chair. **A MOTION** was made to approve. The motion was seconded. No opposition. The motion passed.

Emergency Plans: Lt. Colonel Staton asked if there was a volunteer to chair the Emergency Plans committee due to Mr. Pat Santos' resignation. Mr. Chris Guilbeaux, Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP), volunteered for the position unopposed. **A MOTION** was made to approve. The motion was seconded. No opposition. The motion passed.

Mr. Guilbeaux referred to the handout in each folder that he provided and spoke of the reviewed Emergency plans for four parishes: St. Charles, St. Landry, St. Tammany, and Terrebonne. St. Landry, St. Tammany, and Terrebonne's plans needed to be updated. All four reviews were well written but had common issues which included: medical plans, the identification of vulnerable facilities, the inclusion of evacuation route maps, the explanation of abbreviations, acronyms, and to define terms. Mr. Guilbeaux stated that four more parishes will be reviewed in the next quarter, they are: Allen, Beauregard, Cameron, and Catahoula.

Lt. Colonel Staton asked if there was a guideline for the parish plan assessment. Mr. Guilbeaux stated there is a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) document which is a template on how emergency plans are to be written called the CPG101. There are two emergency plan reviewers employed by GOHSEP to review all the parish plans at least every two years. Mr. Edward Flynn with the Louisiana Chemical Association (LCA)

stated he was not comfortable approving the previous meeting's minutes if the previous parish plan reviews were not deemed sufficient by GOHSEP. Mr. Guilbeaux stated they ensure the parishes meet the minimum requirements for FEMA. GOHSEP does not have the jurisdictional authority to approve or deny an emergency plan, they can merely provide recommendations. The parish president is the only person that can approve the parish plan. Mr. Guilbeaux said the state is separated into nine regions and each region has a GOHSEP coordinator or plan reviewer. This coordinator will visit the parish, review their emergency plan, and schedule a return visit to discuss their recommendations. Mr. James "Jim" Polk pointed out that the parish's motivation to complete a plan is mainly driven in an effort to obtain federal grant money. Mr. Guilbeaux said that a parish plan has only ever been deemed insufficient once and the only opportunity for a plan to be called into question after it meets the FEMA guidelines is if during an emergency that particular parish plan does in fact fail while being utilized.

Training and Resources: Mr. Cecil Bennett discussed the statistics for first responder training at the LSU Fire & Emergency Training Institute (FETI) facility and at the Louisiana State Police's Joint Emergency Services Training Center (JESTC). Mr. Bennett stated that between FETI and JESTEC thirty-six hazardous material classes were held between April 1, 2013 and June 30, 2013 with five-hundred and sixty-three students participating in those classes. Mr. Bennett did point out that his statistics did not include hazardous material classes given by private consulting companies, local municipalities, and by members of industry. Ms. Cheryl Nolan with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) stated they do their own hazmat technician refresher classes for their employees. Lt. Colonel Staton inquired if FETI and JESTEC are able to keep up with the demand for training. Mr. Bennett said some private consulting and training companies have gone out of business recently; however, there is still a high demand for training as insurance companies will audit and raise their rates on industry that does not participate in training.

Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Service: No Report. Mr. James "Jim" Polk brought some Louisiana Revised Statutes to discuss pertaining to the powers of a parish president and parish homeland security agencies. Those particular Revised Statutes are: RS 29:727, RS 29:728, and RS 29:729. Mr. Polk stated he would like to create a document to answer some frequently asked questions pertaining to the LEPC's and the LERC. Lt. Colonel Staton asked what he would need to accomplish this task. Mr. Polk stated if he could get the assistance of fellow LERC members and input from other agencies he would like to have this ready for the Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Association (LEPA) board of directors meeting which is scheduled for February of 2014. Mr. Edward Flynn volunteered to assist him and indicated he would enlist some industry for input as well.

Public Information: No Report. Captain Taylor Moss could not attend today as he was at the Bayou Corne sinkhole one year anniversary ceremony.

Emergency Notification: Mr. Edward Flynn introduced an agenda for the ChemSECURE Workshop meeting to be held in New Orleans, LA on October 17, 2013. The purpose will be for industry to engage with the local emergency response and preparedness community.

Mr. Flynn also detailed two recently created documents, one from the Texas Department of Insurance and one from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), pertaining to the best practices and procedures for the safe handling, manufacturing, and storing of Ammonium Nitrate.

Flynn outlined the need for a creation of legislation to improve flexibility of emergency notification to also include electronic reports instead of enforcing only telephonic notification. He suggested the idea of distributing these materials electronically as references for emergency preparedness groups as guides for preparing plans. He encourages open communication between all agencies in order to create a strong, solid plan of action for each and every incident possibility to be thorough, and providing these materials to these agencies will encourage and guide them towards working together towards that goal.

## **6. Old Business**

Lt. Colonel Staton asked if there are any topics to discuss of old business. There were no old business topics for discussion.

## **7. New Business**

Lt. Colonel Staton introduced Lt. Kelly Feet to give his presentation on the Hazardous Materials Emergency Management (HMEP) Grant. Lt. Feet stated that parishes currently pay private companies to conduct commodity flow studies. Louisiana State Police is the recipient of the HMEP Grant and would like to develop our own commodity flow study program. This would be utilized to teach the parishes to conduct their own studies; some parishes currently pay private companies upwards of \$40,000 to conduct this study. One goal of the program is to create an application for smartphones to be utilized by first responders with overlaying maps with high risk areas, GPS coordinates, and Tier II filing information. They would ultimately want to give parishes a workbook and get their own study together and see what type of training they need. This system would be back by FETI, GOHSEP, Louisiana State Police, and other agencies.

This program will provide all necessary courses for their EPA certificate, allowing for students to undergo thorough training and receive their certification upon completion. The grant covers room, board, and training- the sole purpose being for education of local parish governments and companies to be more self-sufficient and allow for open communication of chemical traffic within their communities. There will be links and pins provided on their website to outline the results of each study performed, along with a plug in area to input different chemicals which will then provide a hypothetical scenario of an accident to help with preparations and planning. The pilot program in December 2013 will uncover areas of improvement in order to tweak and perfect the course offerings for future students. At the 2014 SARA III meeting, they will be able to give a progress report on how the program is doing.

Lt. Colonel Staton stated there was a request from Virginia Task Force 2 for statewide access to the Tier II information via E-Plan in the need for deployment to assist Louisiana in the time of an emergency, and this would require a motion for approval from the commission. **A MOTION** was made to approve. The motion was seconded. No opposition. The motion passed.

Lt. Colonel Staton stated there are updates of LEPC contact information for DeSoto, St. Charles, and Webster parishes. This would require a motion for approval from the commission. **A MOTION** was made to approve. The motion was seconded. No opposition. The motion passed.

Lt. Colonel Staton introduced Mr. Gene Dunegan to discuss a recent presidential executive order. Mr. Dunegan stated the presidential executive order pertained to improving chemical facility safety and security.

Another goal of this order is to open and strengthen communications between separate emergency response entities and chemical companies to provide better preventative plans to avoid future issues. The order also outlines the necessity for information to be readily accessible not only to all involved agencies, but also improve public access about facility risks with regards to national security needs and business confidentiality.

8. Lt. Colonel Staton asked if there are any members of the public present that would have any comments to add.

Ms. Jan Herrington with Positive Results was in the audience. Ms. Herrington said she works with the St. John the Baptist and St. Charles parish offices of emergency preparedness. Ms. Herrington commented on how well the Governor's Office of Homeland Security communicates with St. John and St. Charles parish. And even Louisiana State Police Emergency Services Technician Eric Curlee does an excellent job of keeping the parishes abreast of pertinent information. Ms. Herrington said that St. John parish would have some contact updates to bring forward to the next LERC meeting.

9. Lt. Colonel Staton announced the scheduling of the LERC's next quarterly meeting which occurs on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of the quarter. The next LERC meeting would fall on Wednesday, December 11, 2013, which is of concern due to schedule conflicts associated with other chemical and emergency preparedness meetings. The date December 18, 2013 was suggested and there appeared to be no schedule conflicts. **A MOTION** was made to approve. The motion was seconded. No opposition. The motion passed. Details will be communicated by email to the LERC members at a later date.
10. **A MOTION** was made to adjourn. The motion was seconded. No opposition. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.